

# Mammal Silhouettes - notes and placement

Tool from the *NatureMapping* Program

## SET C

### **Douglas Squirrel/Red Squirrel**

These two tree squirrels are also known as either the Pine Squirrel or Chickaree. The Douglas Squirrel is typical of western Washington while the Red Squirrel is typical of eastern Washington. They are often seen running about in trees and on the ground. Both are active during the entire year and rely on seeds of pinecones, which they often cache. Nests can be made of lichen, moss, and shredded bark within tree branches and in the winter within hollow logs and tree cavities.

Placement; Either high, simulating a tree branch, or on the ground near the base of a tree.

### **Rabbit spp**

Rabbits tend to be smaller than their cousins the hares. They may dig their own burrows (Pygmy rabbit) or utilize burrows from other animals as well as rock crevices (Mountain cottontail). They may feed primarily on sagebrush (Pygmy rabbit) or other grasses, bulbs, leaves, berries or in winter, woody vegetation.

Placement; on the ground which would simulate the proximity to vegetation or thicket area.

### **Gray Squirrel**

There are two Gray Squirrel cousins that are similar in looks and habits, but have been traditionally separated by distribution. The Western Gray squirrel is native to the western-most states while the Eastern Gray squirrel has been known east of the Plain states. The Eastern Gray squirrel has been introduced and is becoming established into areas of the western states. The W. Gray has a much larger/longer rear foot and larger tail.

Placement; either high, simulating a tree branch, or on the ground near the base of a tree.

### **Pica**

The Pica is a small rabbit-ish looking animal with short round ears and no tail. It is associated with talus slopes, rocky banks, and boulder-covered hillsides. They eat green plants and 'harvest' additional plants for drying and storing in dens during the wintertime. They tend to be vocal and are active throughout the year (they don't hibernate).

Placement; in a low place near something resembling rocky cover.

### **Beaver**

Associated with marshy wetlands, the Beaver is a large aquatic rodent that is known for engineering dam complexes and building large dens of sticks with underwater access. Its large flat tail is used to slap the water for alarm signaling. It can often be seen swimming across open water and is occasionally found in the riparian areas gnawing at the base of trees to be felled.

Placement; near an area 'associated' with water.

### **Mouse spp.**

There are many mice species and they can be quite variable. Mice are characterized by large ears and a long tail. They are herbivores and tend to be secretive and elusive in their movements. Many are opportunistic and can be associated with building structures.

Placement; nearly anywhere. They can typically be found high scurrying across the ground, but are often found exploring higher places.

### **Mole spp.**

Moles spend most of their lives underground and are typically only noticed from their dirt mounds. Note that these mounds can be similar to the mounds created by pocket gophers, another animal that utilizes the underground habitat. Moles species can be small (4-5 in.) to large (7-9in.) but have the same general characteristics of small eyes, no visible ear, enlarged, brood front feet with long claws, relatively short scaly tail, and pointed snouts.

Placement; low and most often just as a partial glimpse.

### **Chipmunk spp.**

Chipmunks are generally forest species. They have fur-lined, internal cheek pouches for carrying seeds. They have black and white facial stripes and dark/light stripes on the sides of their bodies. They live primarily on the ground, but may nest may be underground or in the hollow of a tree. Range distribution is a fairly reliable method of identification.

Placement; They can typically be found high scurrying across the ground, but are often found in higher places such as brush piles and trees.

## **Mammal Silhouettes - notes and placement (cont.)**

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### **Weasel spp.**

These are mainly carnivores, but most are also omnivorous. They typically have long, low-slung bodies, short legs, short, rounded ears, and a thick silky coat. Most tend to move quickly with bouncy lopes and otherwise slink over rocks, logs and in burrows. Skunks tend to move more deliberately with a slow, steady gait. All are noted for their musk scent for defense and marking territories.

Placement; low and most often just as a partial glimpse. Often active in pursuit of prey or other food.

### **Vole spp.**

There are several species of voles in WA which are characterized by relatively small ears and eyes, and short legs and tail. They are widespread yet fairly specific to a habitat. Being strictly herbaceous they feed on green vegetation in warmer months and tubers in winter

Placement; typically on the ground simulating the proximity to vegetation and cover.